



State of California

Employment Training Panel

CASE STUDY

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor

Johns Manville Corporation

Founded in 1858, Johns Manville Corporation (Johns Manville) manufactures building and equipment insulation; roofing systems, fiber and fabric mats for construction and industry, and high-efficiency filtration media. The Johns Manville facility in Willows, Glenn County, employs over 400 workers, and manufactures wool fiberglass insulation for walls, attics and floors in residential and commercial buildings, and distributes products throughout the West Coast. Because Glenn County consistently exceeds the state average unemployment rates by 50 percent or more, Johns Manville's commitment to training and job retention is critical to assisting the local economy and maintaining the local job base.

In order to remain competitive, Johns Manville faced the challenge of hiring skilled, entry-level workers. Because manufacturing technology is constantly evolving, existing equipment is now being monitored and controlled by computer systems with which workers had little experience. Training to enhance and improve the skill level of operators, machine chiefs, electricians, team leaders and mechanics was necessary to allow for more effective equipment operation, resulting in less downtime, increased production, and reduced costs.

Primarily interested in reducing costs, Johns Manville focused upon improving employee skills through training in Six Sigma (quality) and other elements that targeted improvement in bottom line costs. Six Sigma training creates different skill levels identified as 'belts; thus, it is also called "Black Belt" quality training. Johns Manville's Six Sigma training was particularly effective as the company trained 40 "Six Sigma Green Belts", who now work on cost saving and safety inducing projects. The company plans to continue its Six Sigma concepts and strive for "Black Belt" status.

Johns Manville also provided upgrade training to their millwrights and electricians, and introduced the tools and concepts of Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), and leadership skills to their supervisors and selected frontline workers. They also provided training in new continuous improvement techniques to improve processes.

The company's leadership training raised the overall organizational leadership skill level. The TPM training has also been beneficial as equipment is running more smoothly, at reduced costs, with less down time and repairs during production runs.

Johns Manville trained 65 workers within this ETP contract and earned \$46,800. With the training completed, company representatives feel they are closer to their goals and are now reducing costs and improving production through newly acquired skills and training enhancements.

"ETP funding has helped us improve our employees' skills, making them more valuable while helping us become more competitive with our out-of-state competitors."

**Marianne Krantz, Training Specialist
Johns Manville Corporation**

For information regarding ETP programs, call ETP's Economic Development Unit at 916/327-5640 or e-mail edu@etp.ca.gov

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